

Life of the Spirit

A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY THE ENGLISH DOMINICANS

VOL. XVI NOVEMBER 1961 NO. 184

CONTENTS

- The Human Condition: A study of some seventeenth century
French writers *Aelred Squire, O.P.* 166
- Encounter with God—III: From Tabernacle to Temple
Joseph Bourke, O.P. 182
- St Augustine on the Trinity—II *Edmund Hill, O.P.* 198
- REVIEWS: *Laurence Bright, Anthony Kenny, Giles Hibbert,*
R. A. Noel, Robert Sharp, Sr Anne, Archbishop Roberts 204

*Literary communications and books for review should be addressed to
The Editor of Life of the Spirit, Blackfriars, Cambridge (Tel. 52461).
Communications regarding advertisements, subscriptions and orders should be
addressed to The Manager, Blackfriars Publications Ltd., 2 Serjeants' Inn,
London, E.C.4. (Tel. FLE 9751) Annual subscription, 30s. 0d. (\$4.50).
Single copies 2s. 6d. (50 cents).*

Printed in England at the Grosvenor Press, Portsmouth

The Human Condition

A Study of some Seventeenth Century French Writers¹

AELRED SQUIRE, O.P.

'We are like ruinous old houses that are falling down on every side. If you prop them up on one side, they fall down on the other. They must be supported in all directions, and renovated from the very foundations, for the whole thing is going to rack and ruin. We are all the same, the perfect and the imperfect alike. History is full of souls that have been lost by the abundance of their graces . . . Lucifer found the occasion of his ruin in heaven'.

These few phrases, which end with something that sounds like a reminiscence of Gregory the Great, are nevertheless as characteristic of their own author as they are of their period. They form part of an address given by Pierre de Bérulle² at the opening of his visitation of one of those Carmelite convents for whose existence in France he, more than anyone else, was responsible, and they may well serve as a symbol of the theme I wish to discuss in this study, a theme which I think is not without an important bearing upon some topics of contemporary interest. Of this, however, the reader must be left to judge for himself. These pages are offered in the guise of history, not of controversy.

When, by 1595, Henri IV was firmly established in Paris and conditions favourable to a Catholic religious revival in France were returning, it was not only burned and ravaged churches and monasteries that lay in ruins in so many places. These were, in their way, no more than the signs of an interior condition of spirit whose true nature a small number of men of spiritual insight were to discern, as they let it awaken in them a renewed realization of the bearing of traditional Catholic life

¹The substance of a lecture delivered in the autumn of 1960 to the French department of the Faculty of Letters in the University of Reading.

²A photographic reproduction of Père F. Bourgoing's fine *editio princeps* of the *Oeuvres Complètes du Cardinal de Bérulle* (Paris, 1644) has recently been printed at Montsault (Seine et Oise). It is therefore to this edition by work and page that all references in this study are given. The opening quotation is from *Oeuvres de Piété* CXVI (p. 972). These smaller works are hereafter cited as O.P.

and teaching upon the religious and human situation of their own day.

It is important, I believe, to try to appreciate that situation as it appeared at the time.³ When one remembers that about a third of the property of the entire French nation consisted of ecclesiastical benefices in which the *haute bourgeoisie* had considerable financial and family interests, it is easy to see why to so many Frenchmen in the sixteenth century the spirit of reform seemed to be primarily an attack on the existing political arrangements. The dissociation between the administration of Church property and the exercise of spiritual functions was too long-standing to appear as scandalous as it does to us today. Even the Huguenot Sully held four commendatory abbacies, and we shall also notice that it was sometimes through what would seem to us to be abuses that notable figures in the Catholic counter-reform found themselves in a position to exert the influence they did. The future Mère Angélique Arnauld became abbess of Port Royal at the age of eleven and later de Rancé, the reformer of la Trappe, was to begin his career by holding his abbacy *in commendam* in the familiar style. Nor were these two centres of controversy the only ones to benefit by the workings of a system whose effect was seen by everyone to be first and foremost juridical. It was possible to condemn its abuses without seriously questioning the legal basis upon which many of them rested.

The trials and calamities of civil war inevitably imposed a strain upon a society from which the demands of interior and personal piety had somehow been so successfully banished, banished at least below stairs where some of those humble and loyal household servants, whose hidden part in the Catholic revival must not be underestimated, often continued lives of devotion that flowered in genuine mysticism. Père Guennou's *Couturière mystique de Paris*, which has recently appeared,⁴ gives us an account of a journal of one more, hitherto unknown, case in circumstances like these. To those above stairs, two alternative attractions generally offered themselves. Those who were troubled by what an earlier natural theologian Raymond Sebond had called '*un vide qui a besoin d'être comblé*' sometimes turned to Calvinism. It is probable that Calvinism, which was not without its political converts, made many others among men who were profoundly disgusted with the existing religious situation around them and saw, among the Calvinists, people with a genuine spiritual life and services that offered moving

³My debt, in the purely historical sections of this paper, to the various studies of M. l'abbé Louis Cognet will be very evident.

⁴Paris, 1960.

sermons instead of dead ceremonies. It was not really dogma that drew so many of the best spirits in this direction. When Anne Arnauld declared that she preferred the company of her Calvinist aunts because they were obviously so much better than the Catholic ladies she knew, she was using the kind of argument which is almost impervious to controversy. Where this admiration for Calvinism did not lead outside the Church, it often acted as a powerful stimulus towards the kind of piety that consists in a practical consciousness of man's human misery and a dependence upon the redemptive work of the Saviour, of which there is, after all, a long and orthodox tradition stretching back into the Dark Ages. The effect of an almost daily contact with Calvinism, into which his work threw him, is a factor of primary importance in the development of the ideas of François de Sales, of which we shall presently have to speak.

But it was not always in a specifically Christian direction at all that cultivated Frenchmen turned for consolation. Stoicism had a great vogue, and Marcus Aurelius and Lucretius were the preferred authors of a humanist trend which tended to think of God more and more as a philosophical entity than as a person, and to put man back in the centre of a world picture from which the thought of an eternal destiny had all but disappeared. M. Adam of the Sorbonne, in a recent lecture in Oxford⁵, has drawn a contrast between the natural theology of Raymond Sebond, of which a translation by Montaigne appeared in 1569, and the thought of Justus Lipsius the humanist who was working in the Low Countries at this same period. Although for Sebond 'nulle chose créée n'est plus voisine à l'homme que l'homme à soi-même', he gives a phenomenology of man which is far from an optimistic and abstract humanist construction of harmony and balance, and is therefore, M. Adam believes, an ideal preparation for understanding Pascal. Lipsius, on the other hand, is not concerned with the blindness and misery of man's actual condition. He begins with the notion of a God of reason, whose wisdom is reflected in an ordered universe. He gives us a picture of a system in which the consequences of the fall and the dominance of the world by the forces of evil, traditional to and inherent in the Christian world-view, are discreetly not denied but stated, as it were, in parenthesis. He appeals to the authority of St Jerome when he says that there is 'a certain natural holiness in our souls which exercises judgment about good and evil', but it is from Cicero and the Stoics

⁵A. Adam, *Sur le problème religieux dans la première moitié du XVII^e siècle* (Oxford, 1959), the Zaharoff lecture for that year.

that his doctrine really derives. It would be a complicated task to attempt to trace all the ramifications and metamorphoses of the humanism of this period and, even were I competent to do so, it would not serve our immediate purpose. It is sufficient to note that apart from the appearance in 1622 of a similar spirit to that of Lipsius in Grotius' work *De Veritate Religionis Christianae*, there are numerous signs that many theologians, either members of, or closely connected with the Society of Jesus, were deeply penetrated with the spirit of a humanism of this type. As M. Adam has pointed out, one of these, Lessius, who was teaching at Douai for seven years from 1574 and at Louvain for fifteen years from 1585, gives fifteen proofs of the existence of God of which not one derives either from Aristotle or any of the old scholastic masters. They invoke a description of the seasons, or the mysteries of the animal kingdom or a meditation on the starry heavens.

The essential note of the various Christian attempts to find a compromise with the humanist materialism of this period is an optimism about a world in which evil is scarcely allowed the place it has in the older theology. With this there frequently goes an endeavour to find a place for natural man before the face of God. There can be no doubt that this tendency found doctrinal expression in the ideas of the Spanish Jesuit Molina, who in his *Concordia*, published in 1588, taught that the efficacy of divine grace has its ultimate foundation not within the substance of the gift of grace itself, but in the divine foreknowledge of free human co-operation with this gift. Lessius adopted essentially the same standpoint on this question. Nor were these the only expressions of this theological approach. Another of the more notable, which gave considerable scandal to theologians of a traditional Augustinian type, was the *Défense de la Vertu* of the Jesuit Père Antoine Sirmond, which came out in Paris in 1641. The author's thesis is that the Christian life does not formally require us to produce acts of the love of God for their own sake. The observance of the commandments and the doing of good are the only precepts that bind under pain of grave sin. It is easy to see how this theory gives the virtues of the pagans a foothold in heaven. The act of charity only obliges to the extent that it may be the condition of the fulfilment of our Christian duties towards God, neighbour or self. 'I am quite ready to say', he writes, 'that God in commanding us to love him is content *au fond* that we should obey him in his other commandments'. In other words, the command to love is merely negative, and Sirmond even says 'we are not so much commanded to love as not to hate'. Although, as I have said, this book

was not published until 1641, it is relevant to mention it when we are discussing an earlier period, not only because it comes at the end of the career of a man who had been teaching for years, but also because it represents a logical development of trends which are discernable at a considerably earlier date. These trends are inevitably reflected in works of popular piety, which tend to offer their readers a devout life *beside* a worldly one.

An awareness of these two widely differing influences of Calvinism and humanism is essential to a proper understanding of the evolution of François de Sales, the first of the great figures of the Catholic revival in seventeenth century France. François was born in the duchy of Savoy, which was no part of the kingdom of France, on August 21st, 1567. In 1581, after a schooling at the nearby town of Annecy, he went by his father's wish to Paris for his university education, and it was there at the Jesuit college of Clermont that he came into vital contact with the humanism of the Society. This first period in Paris was marked by a painful spiritual crisis about which our information is not as full as we could wish but, any psychological and temperamental considerations apart, it clearly arose out of the discussions on predestination which were then in the air, and with which François, still only a boy, was ill-equipped to cope. After six weeks of mental torture in which he came to feel that he might well be one of the damned, he suddenly found relief at the feet of the black statue of our Lady in the Church of St Etienne-des-Grès. As a result of this crisis he eventually emerged from his theological studies a convinced Molinist. Molinism claimed to be a kind of Thomism and one wonders whether it was not perhaps some other kind of Thomism rather than the text of St Thomas himself that had been the cause of his anxiety, for any student of Aquinas would probably admit that his doctrine on predestination *could* be presented in a way which might appear almost indistinguishable from pure Calvinism. This providential personal experience cannot have been without its importance in the development of that extraordinary combination of firmness and gentleness which was later to characterize him as a director. What his natural temperament was may, perhaps, still be considered something of an open question. I confess that long before I had made the leisure to read the first volume of Brémond's great study of this period, I had come to feel profoundly sceptical about François' reputation for irascibility, even though this appears to be based on his own statements. Brémond has made at least some case for regarding them as not unambiguous, and I still feel that it is possible that it was

not in his gentleness but in his firmness that his virtue consisted. At least of the latter quality no one who has seriously tried to follow his teaching could any more doubt than they would of the former, and on this matter we have irreproachable contemporary evidence. 'If this holy man had stayed in France', says Mère Angélique Arnauld in her *Relation sur Port Royal*, 'I believe I could have derived great profit from his holy direction, which was never soft and sweet, as most people have supposed. He overlooked nothing in souls that wished to be led in the truth'.⁶ Anyone who has seen the death mask of Mère Angélique, with its almost frightening masculine strength, may judge what this testimony is worth.

But that is to anticipate. At the completion of his studies in Paris in 1588, François was sent to the university of Padua, in the hope that he would settle for a secular career, but there he met the spiritual book he was afterwards to swear by, the *Spiritual Combat* of Lorenzo Scupoli, and nothing could alter his desire for the priesthood. Accordingly he was ordained to the priesthood on December 18th, 1593, at Annecy, the town to which the Calvinists of Geneva had forced their bishop to retire. In the following year, at his own insistence, he set to work on the dangerous and difficult task of converting the Chablais, a disaffected area of the diocese, a task in which his notable success led to his being made co-adjutor to the bishop in July, 1597.

Geographically and culturally François was admirably placed to appreciate all the factors at work in the religious situation in France at this period. He had, on the one hand, his direct experience with Calvinism. On the other, contacts, largely through the milieu of Mme Acarie, with all the principal figures of the Catholic revival in Paris, were fostered by an eight months stay in the city, terminating in the autumn of 1602. There would seem to be some reason for thinking that it was this second stay in Paris that gave an impulse to the extensive spiritual correspondence whose remarkably mature beginnings preceded and in some ways occasioned the publication of the *Introduction to the Devout Life*. On his return from Paris in 1602 François succeeded to the difficult bishopric of Geneva, being ordained bishop on December 8th of that year. Naturally, he was now busier than ever but, using his spiritual correspondence as a basis, he had by 1608 produced a book whose success was immediate and lasting. There was a second edition of the *Introduction to the Devout Life* in 1609, another in 1610, another in

⁶*Relation écrite par la Mère Angélique Arnauld sur Port-Royal* ed. L. Cognet (Paris, 1949), pp. 100 and 101.

1616 and a definitive edition in 1619. 'This is', he says in his preface, 'a very capricious age, and I foresee clearly that many will say, that it appertains only to religious and persons of devotion, to direct individual souls along the path of piety, that such a work requires more leisure than a bishop can well spare, when charged with a diocese so heavy as mine is; that it is too great a distraction to the understanding, which should be employed in affairs of greater importance. But, as for me, my dear reader, I say, with the great St Denis, that it appertains principally to bishops to lead souls to perfection'.⁷ There were a few of François' contemporaries who were not slow to see that this was the conviction which so many years hard work with the Calvinists had produced, that the answer to Calvinism was not controversy but holiness, without which nothing would be gained. Its relevance to the struggle with Calvinism was, of course, only one aspect of the importance of a book which in François' own lifetime had been translated into Italian, Latin, English, Spanish and German. François died in 1622, but by 1656 the book was available in seventeen languages and when Dom Mackey edited it for the Annecy edition in the nineteenth century it must have run through more than a thousand editions. Its influence, direct and indirect, has been almost incalculable and, at least in England, this has possibly been as powerful beyond the confines of the Church as it has within it and certainly as continuous. Marie de Medici sent a copy of it bound with diamonds and precious stones to King James I, and a proclamation of May 14th, 1637, shows that it was important enough for Charles I to order all copies of it in England to be destroyed to save himself from the imputation of being a Catholic.

What was the reason for this universal acclamation? Though incomparably better written, the *Introduction* retains, at least on its surface, something of the colour and flavour of many of the little books of humanist piety that had preceded it. It does seem, incidentally, that in spite of the avowal of the preface that he has given no thought to elegance of style, François did in fact make a number of revisions of the language prior to the definitive edition of 1619, though these are mainly in favour of the lucidity which is such a mark of his writing. Yet it was not because it was the product of a singularly talented hand that this little book was so outstanding. It was rather that under the appearances of the familiar it was a *volte-face* from the contemporary humanist standpoint. Far from countenancing a depersonalized piety

⁷Citations from the *Introduction* are cited in the translation of Allan Ross (London, 1924).

which would dissociate the world of devotion from the avocations of secular life, the *Introduction* is inspired by a vision of personal engagement in any and every situation. 'And since devotion', says François in his opening chapter, 'consists in a certain excelling degree of charity, it not only makes us ready, active and diligent in observing all the commandments of God; but it also prompts us to do readily and heartily as many good works as we can, even though they be not in any sort commanded, but only counselled or inspired. . . In fine, charity and devotion differ no more, the one from the other, than the flame from the fire'. The devout life is, in other words, the Christian life in all its fullness.

It was his invigorating demands that ensured for François' *Introduction to the Devout Life* its prominent rôle in the Catholic revival of his own day, and its effectiveness was due in no small measure to his exceptional genius as a spiritual director. François is no theoretician of the spiritual life, he has none of the fecundating theological ideas which were to make Pierre de Bérulle the father of so many spiritual children, but among spiritual directors he was that one in ten thousand of whom he speaks, who knows how to accommodate himself to individual differences of character and vocation and appreciates how to give his directives a practical bearing upon what he finds. The *Introduction* reveals already his immense interest in and insight into psychological processes and his tendency to constellate all he has to say about the exercise of the virtue of charity—he believed that it was by charity that the walls of Geneva would be broken down—but it is not, of course, in the *Introduction* that we shall look for the fullest justification of that way of living whereby, through fidelity to mental prayer, the Christian life of action becomes charged with spirit. This we shall find in the most remarkable product of François' extraordinary spontaneity, his *Traité de l'amour de Dieu*.

I say 'extraordinary spontaneity' for this huge book which, however familiar one becomes with it, never fails to astound one with the apparently inexhaustible abundance, freshness, neatness and appositeness of its imagery, was often written on the backs of envelopes in odd quarters of an hour snatched from periods when, among other things, the bishop was sometimes coping with as many as twenty-five letters a day. It was in composition over a very long and formative phase. Parts of it were written prior to the publication of the *Introduction to the Devout Life*, but it owes its distinctive character chiefly to a developing relationship with the most gifted of François' spiritual daughters, Mme

Jeanne Françoise Fremiot de Chantal. Writing of his method of meditation in the *Introduction* François had said 'Some will tell you that, in the representation of these mysteries, it is better to make use of the simple thought of faith, and of a simple apprehension entirely mental and spiritual, or else to consider that the things are done within your own spirit; but that is too subtle for a commencement, and until such time as God may raise you higher, I counsel you to remain in the low valley which I have shown you'.⁸ He first came to know Jeanne Françoise in 1604 and his first direction of her was in conformity with the suspicion of an abstract and mystical spirituality which the foregoing passage suggests. But Jeanne Françoise was instinctively a mystic and when, about 1607, she came into contact with the newly founded Carmel at Dijon, where she discovered kindred spirits, François found himself gradually forced to let her show *him* ways of which he would, equally instinctively, have been cautious.⁹ The interest he was thus compelled to take in mystical theory is reflected in the finished *Traité*, which eventually came from the press on July 31st, 1616.

In the first four books of the *Traité*, which in his preface he declares to be more or less optional reading for 'such souls as only seek the practice of holy love', François makes it his business, as he says, to go deep down into the roots of the subject and to construct as a basis for his affective piety a minute theory of the human will. It is indeed, he says, the *man* who loves, but he loves by his will, and therefore the end of his love is of the nature of his will: but his will is spiritual and consequently the union which love aims at is spiritual also.¹⁰ In his doctrine of the mystical path which culminates in union with God, François will therefore lay great emphasis on conformity of will to the will of God. In the sanctuary of the human soul there is 'une certaine éminence et suprême pointe de la rayson et faculté spirituelle' which is not guided by the light of argument or reasoning, but by a simple view of the understanding and a simple movement of the will, by which the spirit bends and submits to the truth and the will of God. Into this *pointe de l'âme* 'reasoning enters not . . . and all the light is in some sort obscured and veiled by the renunciations and resignations which the soul makes, not desiring so much to behold and see the goodness of the truth and the truth of the goodness presented to her, as to embrace and

⁸Part 2, chap. 4.

⁹Letter 54 in *Selected Letters of St Francis de Sales*, ed. E. Stopp (London, 1960) may be cited as typical of this phase.

¹⁰Bk I, chap. 10.

adore the same'.¹¹ If this doctrine will be important to those who are approaching the summits, those who are only in the foothills will find François anxious to emphasize what is hopeful in the human situation and to insist on the good which remains in man even after the Fall. 'As soon as man thinks, with even a little attention, of the divinity, he feels a certain delightful emotion of the heart, which testifies that God is the God of the human heart . . . We are created to the image and likeness of God: what does this mean', he says, 'but that we have an extreme affinity with his divine majesty?'¹² For François the fundamental possibilities of the spiritual life are thus rooted in nature itself, though they cannot be realized without the assistance and animation of grace. Before this theological tenet the question therefore arises: Why does nature give us a thirst for a precious water of which she cannot give us to drink? In a delicately constructed chapter he reaches this conclusion. 'This inclination to love God above all things, which is natural to us, does not remain in our hearts for nothing; for God, on his side, uses it as a loop to capture us more gently and draw us to himself, and it seems that by this, the divine goodness somehow keeps a hold on our hearts like little birds on a string, by which he can draw us when it please his mercy to take pity on us—and on our side, it is a sign and reminder of our origin and creator, to whose love it moves us, giving us a secret intimation that we belong to his divine goodness'.¹³

The presence of this 'spark under the ashes' is for François the ground of his optimism about the possibility of real holiness for each individual soul and, as we might expect in the prince of directors, the fullest value is given to the personal differences of vocation by which this possibility is realized. 'In truth', he observes, as we see that there are never found two men perfectly resembling one another in natural gifts, so are there never found any wholly equal in supernatural ones . . . And although grace is not given to men according to their natural conditions, yet the divine sweetness rejoicing, and as one would say exulting, in the production of graces infinitely diversifies them. To ask why this is, is as absurd as to ask why God made melons larger than strawberries, or lilies larger than violets . . . It is an impertinence to search out why St Paul had not the grace of St Peter, or St Peter that of St Paul . . . for one would answer to these enquiries that the Church is a garden diapered with innumerable flowers; it is necessary then that they should be of various sizes, various colours, various odours, in fine of

¹¹Bk I, chap. 12.¹²Bk I, chap. 15.¹³Bk I, chap. 18.

different perfections'.¹⁴ Indeed he is so keenly aware and appreciative of these personal qualities that we sense his reluctance to envisage the stripping of the soul in its preparation for union with God as anything like a depersonalization, and find him saying of it 'We cannot long remain in this nakedness, despoiled of all sorts of affections. Wherefore following the advice of the holy apostle, as soon as we have put off the garments of the old Adam, we are to put on the habits of the new man, that is to say of Jesus Christ, for having renounced all—yes, even the affection to virtues, neither desiring of these nor of other things a larger portion than God's will intends—we must put on again divers affections, and *perhaps the very same which we have renounced and resigned*: but we must now put them on again not because they are agreeable to us, but because they are agreeable to God'.¹⁵ In spite then of his perhaps sometimes disturbing experience with Mme de Chantal, we find no attempt in François to systematize the passive purifications of the spirit, such as readers in France would shortly meet in the translations of the Spanish Carmelite John of the Cross, and even his most telling passage about the soul's passivity in the hand of God is given a touchingly personal character by the use of a lovely image of a mother with a child in her arms. He has, too, a practical optimism about the life of the human affections. 'Divine love', he says, 'is willing for us to have other loves; nor can we easily discover which is the chief love of our heart . . . Rabbits are incomparably fertile, elephants never have more than one calf; but this little elephant alone is of greater price than all the rabbits in the world. Our love towards creatures often abounds in the multitude of productions; but when sacred love acts its work is so eminent that it surpasses all; for it causes God to be preferred before all things without reserve'.¹⁶ Here is a sense of equilibrium which it is easier to speak about than to maintain, and doubtless François' view is not altogether unaffected by the maturity he himself attained in this respect, a maturity which had perhaps something to do with his natural temperament. On the other hand one must set against this the opening chapter of book XII of the *Traité* in which he insists that progress does not depend upon one's natural temperament. 'Though souls inclined to love have on the one hand', he says, 'a certain propensity which makes them more ready to desire to love God, they are on the other hand so subject to set their affections upon lovable creatures, that their propensity puts them in as great danger of being diverted from the purity of sacred love by a mixture of other loves . . .

¹⁴Bk II, chap. 7.¹⁵Bk IX, chap. 16.¹⁶Bk X, chap. 7.

Nevertheless, if two persons, the one of whom is loving and sweet by nature, the other harsh and sour, have an equal charity, they will love God equally but not alike . . . It imports not much then, whether one have a natural inclination to love, when it is a question of a love which is supernatural, and exercised supernaturally'. From this passage, typical of many one could cite, one can see that for all the value he attributes to personal and human qualities, François never loses his theological clear-headedness. He never confuses nature and grace. From this point of view his humanism has an affinity with the contemporaries of the twelfth century bestiaries and his mitigated Augustinianism often reminds one of the early writers of Cîteaux, especially our own English Aelred of Rievaulx, in whom one could discover some almost verbal parallels. Not, of course, that these writers are in any direct sense his sources, but it is probably no small part of his importance that for all his strongly personal traits François is a very sure interpreter of a long tradition and in him the best of so much medieval spiritual writing seems to live again. If there is an element which brings him closer to his contemporaries it is that, in spite of the psychological rather than metaphysical turn of his thought, François tends to view God very philosophically and directs the souls of his disciples to the divine essence. There is, it is true, a fine section on the Incarnation in book II of the *Traité*, and another, at the close of the work, on Calvary as the academy of love, but it cannot really be said that the incarnate Christ ever attains the prominence in his thought, that he was to play in the thought of a younger man in Paris of whom François had said 'He is everything I should like to be myself'.

Pierre de Bérulle had been born at the Chateau de Serilly in Champagne in 1575, and grew up a grave boy, fond of solitude, who continued to look younger than his years, a false impression which was dispelled when he opened his mouth. 'He was never young', says Brémond, 'though I do not say it to his credit'. After passing, like François de Sales, through the Jesuit Collège de Clermont, his bent for theology led him to the Sorbonne, where he came under the formation of an intellectual clergy, men like Duval and Gallot, among whom scholastic learning still flourished. There too he found men who, often under the pressure of Protestant apologetics, had studied and got to know their Church Fathers. Providence had also thrust him into the heart of the circle of friends of his cousin, Mme Acarie—whose ecstasies had presented both their bewildered subject and her clerical friends with a living theological problem—for, upon the exile of her

husband in 1594, she had retired with her children to the Paris house of Mme de Bérulle. This circle included perhaps the most influential theoretician of the mystical life at this period, the English convert Capuchin Benet of Canfield, and the most notable spiritual director in Paris, the Carthusian Dom Beaucousin. All the members of this group had, beside their real personal taste for spiritual things, a common outlook characteristic of the mystics of the Low Countries and of the Pseudo-Denys, whose works were then being re-edited.¹⁷ Benet of Canfield's *Règle de perfection reduite au seul point de la volonté de Dieu*, which did not appear until 1609, may be regarded as a reliable guide to the sort of thing he had taught Mme Acarie when they first met about 1592. Canfield teaches the renunciation of conceptual and discursive ways in prayer and tends, like Tauler, to by-pass the humanity of Christ to come to the divinity. There is a strong note of self-annihilation in his doctrine of conformity. Bérulle's first work, *Bref discours de l'abnégation intérieure*, which appeared in 1597, two years before his ordination to the priesthood, also throws an indirect light on the ideas current in this milieu and particularly those of his director Dom Beaucousin, at whose command it was written. It is really a free adaptation of a little Italian book by a Milanese lady Isabella Bellinzaga, from which several passages on the humanity of Christ have been eliminated, so that the whole tone, with its insistence on detachment from interior graces, is very abstract and theoretical. When one remembers this background of reading, one can readily understand that a translation of St Teresa of Avila which appeared in 1601 did not make a very favourable impression on Mme Acarie who had, in any case, never experienced imaginary visions of the kind she there read about. But when St Teresa herself appeared to her and told her to bring the Carmelites to France, the matter called for further attention. The advice of Beaucousin, Duval and Bérulle was sought and, after a second appearance, François de Sales who, it will be remembered, was in Paris at the time, was also drawn into the consultation. The upshot of these discussions was that de Bérulle undertook the protracted and difficult negotiation which ended with the arrival in France of six Spanish Carmelites in October, 1604.

The wonderful maturing of de Bérulle's mind as a theologian belongs to the years that follow this first phase in his career. He evident-

¹⁷The pioneer studies of Dom J. Huijben in the literature of this milieu, 'Aux sources de la spiritualité française du XVII^e siècle' (*Vie Spirituelle*, Supplément, Dec., 1930, Jan.-May, 1931) still have their uses.

ly pursued a personal reading of the Latin Fathers, especially Augustine, and some of the Greek Fathers, which carried him far beyond the controversial purposes which may have been, as with so many others, the original object of his study. He has moreover read and meditated on St Paul with care, so that when his spirituality, centering on the mystery of the Incarnation, has evolved, it is rooted in scriptural and patristic sources. His mind is then, as it were, all of a piece, and his manner magisterial. Those who are captured by him will always find it difficult to do him adequate homage. As Dagens has said, the '*Discours de l'état et des grandeurs de Jésus* remind one of Augustine on the Trinity in their combination of speculation, affective piety and *élévations mystiques*',¹⁸ and I imagine a student of the twelfth century meeting him for the first time would scarcely fail to recognize in him the same qualities that put William of St Thierry, an earlier disciple of Augustine, head and shoulders above any other theologian of his century.

'God who produces creatures outside himself in nothingness', says Bérulle in an Advent meditation written some time after 1612, 'wishes in the Incarnation to produce a created nature in himself, in his own being, in the person of his Word, and give it the subsistence of the Word for its subsistence. This is how the work of the Incarnation differs from the work of creation, when God draws the creature out of nothingness and produces and leaves it in nothingness: *Ex nihilo in nihilo* . . .'¹⁹ What this nothingness of God's creature, man, consists in is the subject of much of Bérulle's reflective effort, and the background to these reflections is this mystery of the union of the two natures in the one person of Jesus Christ. For 'since from this new being a new order follows, so from this new order follows a change and innovation in the conduct of divine providence. It is no longer the heavens that rule the earth, but it is the earth that rules the heavens; and the first mover is no longer in the skies, but on the earth, since God has become incarnate on earth. For it is God incarnate who is now the first mover; and the first heaven which moved all the others has changed its order and place, and is now only the second mover. Even the order, state and situation of the principal parts of the world is reversed by the reversal that God has made with regard to himself in this mystery. For heaven is no longer above the earth, but the earth is above the highest heaven, that is namely, the earth of our humanity living in Jesus Christ'²⁰. In this last sentence is the germ of all Bérulle's spiritual and ascetic doctrine.

¹⁸J. Dagens, *Bérulle et les origines de la restauration Catholique* (Paris, 1952).

¹⁹O.P. XV, p. 767. ²⁰*Discours*, IV, 8, p. 222.

For what does an examination of the creaturely condition reveal? 'Being is not essential and necessary in a creature, for an eternity passed by without its coming to be: but if the creature *does* exist, if it is created, then it is dependent, it serves its creator, and it is easier to efface its being than its servitude. Our being is a relationship to God (*Notre estre est un rapport à Dieu*). The more perfect this relationship is, the more excellent our being . . . The thing we care for and our duty, our perfection and our contentment go together. For since we cannot be gods by nature, cannot be absolute and independent, cannot exist to ourselves, to wish to do so is to wish for the impossible and to fight against our very being'.²¹ This, he says in the sixth of the *Discours*²², is the wretched condition of the sinner who can indeed be his own ruin but cannot destroy what is his by nature; for this necessarily implies a condition of indigence, of adherence to and dependence on the Creator, which cannot in any wise be separated from him. God's device on the other hand is: He who is. It will be seen that this conception of the nothingness of the creature does not just imply the infinite distance between the maker and the made, but also implies the relationship of dependence, and the opposition between existing to oneself and existing to God. 'Man as man has', he says, 'a kind of life which is proper to him, which makes him different from plants and animals, which raises him above everything sensory and created, which makes him tend towards uncreated being, gives him a capacity for God and makes him bear his image and likeness in so many ways: and the further he goes from this movement towards and relationship to God the further he withdraws himself from the life which is proper to man as man'.²³ The condition of being a man, then, is not to be purely nothing, but to have a vocation to God—a vocation which demands a response. This is why sin is a turning back from this call in the depths of our being, and is 'a second nothingness worse than the first; a nothingness of grace, a nothingness opposed to God, a nothingness resisting God: and hell is the ultimate establishment in this wretched state of nothingness, where the damned completely lose the use of the good of their natural being, and are irreparably established in the condition and servitude of sin'.²⁴ This is, as it were, the opposite pole of that vision of man 'considered in the design of God' which we find in an unfinished meditation on man's creation where Bérulle has turned a reminiscence of Pico della Mirandola's *Oration on the dignity of man* to his own purposes. 'Il est miracle

²¹O.P. CXXI, p. 981.²²p. 251.²³O.P. CXXI, p. 982.²⁴O.P. CXXXI, p. 998.

d'une part, et de l'autre un néant: il est céleste d'une part, et terrestre de l'autre: Il est spirituel d'une part et corporal de l'autre. C'est un ange, c'est un animal, c'est un néant, c'est un miracle, c'est un centre, c'est un monde, c'est un Dieu, c'est un néant environné de Dieu, indigeant de Dieu, capable de Dieu, et remply de Dieu s'il veut'.²⁵

S'il veut—if he wishes. 'May I know you, and know myself', he prays in a prayer to the Trinity, 'may I refer myself to you, as you have referred me to yourself . . . by the very condition of my being, which is nothing but an inseparable shadow of your being, and a simple relationship to you'.²⁶ Here again is the conviction that any conception of man apart from God is necessarily false, because, separated from him, man's very being turns back towards nothingness. 'The world of nature and the world of grace are two worlds, though the one exists and is found in the other . . . In the world of nature there are many categories: but in God, who is the world of worlds . . . there are only two categories . . . substance and relation . . . no accidents, no quality, no quantity. In this world the category of relation is one of the least, *tenuissimae entitatis*, and yet it is the most important category in the world of grace, which only exists and consists in relation to God'.²⁷ 'Let us then', he says elsewhere, 'contemplate the world as always emanating from God and always referred to God by God himself. . . Let us have regard to this relationship and aspire to it by a new and special relation which we shall make of the world and ourselves to God, corresponding by our free will to the necessary, primitive and essential condition of our being'.²⁸ This is what the life lived in Christ enables us to do. It is, as one recent study of Bérulle has put it, the restoration of a created relation, which subsists in virtue of another, by an uncreated relation, which subsists in itself.²⁹ It will thus be seen how closely the work of grace in the thought of Bérulle is related to his doctrine of the Trinity. 'We see then', he says, 'that the goodness . . . of God tends by a profound and secret counsel to reduce all things to unity and to enclose everything, that is to say the creator and the creature in a wonderful circle of unity, and to unify them moreover at the point and centre of the divine unity by the mystery of the Incarnation, and by the unity of one Person, at once created and uncreated . . . For the Word is like a marvellous centre of unity, situate in the midst of the divine persons . . . situate in the midst of created and uncreated being . . . and this centre

²⁵O.P. CXIV, p. 969. ²⁶O.P. CLIII, p. 1031.

²⁷O.P. CXVIII, p. 976. ²⁸O.P. CXLVI, p. 1023.

²⁹R. Bellemare, *Le sens de la créature dans la doctrine de Bérulle* (Paris, 1959), p. 143.

of unity draws everything to God'.³⁰

It was a matter of great importance that the man who was to express his concern for the restoration of the true dignity of the priestly life by the foundation of the French Oratory in 1611, should thus have been fitted to lead so many disciples to the waters of a new life. The lines of his influence may be felt throughout the century. M. Vincent de Paul is a son of his; through Condren and Jean-Jacques Olier his doctrine inspires the prayer of St Sulpice, and even the teaching of the Brittany missionary Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort at the turn of the century would be unintelligible without Bérulle. Every time of crisis and change is a time of crisis for the doctrine of God and the doctrine of man. It is, I believe, significant that at the time of which we have been speaking, it was not a doctrine of man of humanistic origins that gave hope to the human situation, but a doctrine that had a deep theological root. As Bossuet, who often has the manner of Bérulle, was to say just after the middle of the century in his great *Sermon sur la mort*: 'La foi nous a rendu à nous-mêmes, et nos faiblesses honteuses ne peuvent nous cacher nôtre dignité naturelle'.³¹

DOMINICAN COLLEGE LIBRARY

RIVER FOREST, ILLINOIS

Encounter with God—III: from Tabernacle to Temple

JOSEPH BOURKE, O.P.

RADIANCE, CONVERGENCE AND CONCENTRICITY

In two previous articles¹ I have tried to explore that special conception of Yahweh's encounter with, and presence to Israel which Old Testament theologians call *kabod* theology. When the Jerusalem temple was destroyed in 586 B.C. the exiled priests finally committed to writing

³⁰*Discours*, VII, 4, p. 267.

³¹Hachette edn. p. 303.

¹*Life of the Spirit*, March and May, 1961.

their own sacred tradition of how Yahweh had first encountered Israel in the desert, made himself present to her, and chosen from among her tribes a priestly race to minister to him in the immediate sphere of his holiness. At the roots of this tradition lies the conception of the *kabod* (glory), the manifestation of Yahweh's holy presence in the form of a radiant and fiery cloud, numinous and death-dealing to all that is profane. The *kabod* descends at intervals to meet the people at a sacred place chosen by Yahweh himself. This sacred place, initially the holy mountain of Sinai, becomes in the pre-Priestly tradition the Tent of Meeting, an oracle tent pitched outside the camp, and in the Priestly tradition proper the Dwelling (*mishkan*), a panoply for the ark, here conceived of as the throne of God; in this guise the shrine of ark and tent combined occupies the centre of the camp with the community of Israel and also (in the later developments of the Priestly tradition) the whole of creation ranged about it in a carefully graded hierarchy.

It can be seen then that the highly idealised Priestly vision of the encounter between Yahweh and man is dominated by a sense of radiance, convergence and concentricity. From the shrine of his *kabod* at the centre of the camp holiness radiates outwards, first to the inner circle of the priests, then to the outer circle of the lay tribes of Israel and then (following the later developments already referred to) to the still broader circles of the Abrahamites, Noachites, and so outwards to the bounds of creation itself. Simultaneously the worship of all creaturehood ceaselessly converges upon the shrine, mediated to the divine presence through Israel and through her priests.

This sense of radiance and convergence, the outward and inward movements of revelation and response, is reflected in the actual structure of the shrine. The innermost sanctuary is the 'holy of holies'; this, as we have seen, is conceived to be the throne-room of Yahweh, with the ark, his empty throne, waiting within for him to descend upon it. Outside this and separated from it by a veil is the 'holy place' (Exod. 26. 33). Surrounding the whole is an area known as the 'court of the tabernacle' (Exod. 27. 9 ff.). This constitutes the immediate sphere of holiness and is separated from the camp by a curtained boundary. The sense of radiance from, and convergence upon the shrine as source of holiness is vividly reflected in this arrangement of the tabernacle courts. Yet it must be recognized that the basic historical realities have been idealized and overlaid with the interpretations of a much later age. In the minds of these priestly theologians, writing from the perspective of the exile, the two separate desert shrines of ark and tent have been

fused into a single complex structure known as the tabernacle. Moreover they have projected their memories of Solomon's glorious temple backwards in time to this desert age, so that the tabernacle to them is a sort of small portable temple made of wood, curtains and skins, while conversely the temple is a vaster version of the tabernacle fixed upon Mount Zion, and reproducing in permanent and more elaborate materials the essential structure and proportions of the earlier shrine. In the temple the 'holy of holies' becomes the *debir*, the innermost cell where the ark is placed (I Kgs 6. 19 ff.). The 'holy place' becomes the *hekal* (I Kgs 6. 3, 17, 33), the main hall or nave of the temple which leads up to the *debir*, and which was almost certainly on a lower level, being separated from it by olive-wood doors (I Kgs 6. 31 ff.), corresponding to the curtain of the tabernacle (Exod. 26. 31-33). Outside this again lies the porch (*ûlam*, I Kgs 6. 3 ff.), separated from the *hekal* by cypress-wood doors (I Kgs 6. 34); these correspond to the screen of the tabernacle at the entrance to the 'holy place' (Exod. 26. 36 ff.). The whole edifice stands on a sort of broad platform extending outwards on every side and constituting a sacred area or *temenos* round the actual shrine. This is known as the 'inner court' of the temple, and is bounded by a low wall (I Kgs 6. 36). It corresponds clearly to the 'court of the tabernacle' (Exod. 27. 9 ff.). A further boundary wall divides the temple precincts and the royal palace from the rest of the city, enclosing both buildings within a wider area still, known as the 'outer court' or 'great court' (I Kgs 7. 12); for the king too is sacred and lives closer to God than the common people. But all Jerusalem is a holy city and so constitutes a still broader sphere of holiness. Finally, all round the holy city extends the holy land, God-given and consecrated to his glory.

This idea of the divine presence radiating outwards and of Israel's worship converging inwards through successive spheres of holiness appears even more strikingly in Ezekiel's vision of the restored eschatological temple. (Ezek. 40-42). Here the basic structure of Solomon's temple is reproduced with certain significant modifications (notably the removal of the royal palace from the sacred precincts cf. Ezek. 45. 7 ff.), and in a vastly more elaborate form. The sanctuary of Yahweh's renewed and intensified presence to Israel is here seen as the centre of a still more elaborate series of concentric courts and spheres of holiness extending outwards to include the whole land, with the ancient tribal divisions restored in an altered and idealised form.

Finally in the temple of Herod, the temple which our Lord knew, the arrangement of the courts is supremely expressive of the idea that

the worship of the whole world is gathered up by Israel and converges upon the shrine of God's presence in her midst. On his way to take part in the ministry of the inner sanctuary a priest of this period would have passed successively through the court of the Gentiles (the immense esplanade on which the temple was built), the court of the women, the court of Israel, the court of the priests, and so inwards through the 'ûlam into the *hekal*, where he would have found himself standing before the *debir*, the 'holy of holies', that small empty cell, now bereft of the ark, where the God of Israel was believed to dwell in silence and darkness.

If then the priestly writers describe in immense and often tedious detail the exact structure and measurements of the shrine, that is because they believe that every element in that structure has been directly revealed by God himself and must be preserved as sacrosanct. For them the details of this sacred architecture have an eloquence of their own; they express the priests' own deep sense of radiance and convergence. And this applies in a vital sense to the Church as the 'new Israel of God'. The body of Christ is the new temple replacing the old and becoming, in a still more intimate sense, the shrine of the divine presence among men, the throne of the *kabod*. And the Church, his mystical body, centred upon this new and living 'holy of holies', reproduces in her hierarchical structure this divine eloquence of radiance and convergence. From the dead and risen body of God made man ('Destroy this temple and in three days I will rebuild it', Jn 2. 19) the glory (*kabod*) of the only-begotten (Jn 1. 14) radiates in the form of light and life through successive orders of priests and people outwards to the bounds of creation. Simultaneously worship, embracing even the most dumb and blind motions of creaturely adoration, is gathered up and made articulate in the liturgy of the visible Church and mediated to the presence of God in God made man, through the faithful and through their priests. This same sense of convergence and concentricity is reflected in certain of the psalms and canticles, above all in the *Benedicite*, where the command to bless God is addressed initially to all creation and then to successively narrowing groups within the created order culminating with the sons of Aaron and the 'saints' who are humble of heart. 'All ye works of the Lord bless the Lord! . . . O sons of men bless the Lord! . . . O Israel bless the Lord! . . . O ye priests of the Lord bless the Lord! . . . O ye holy and humble of heart bless the Lord! etc.' (Dan. 3. 57, 82-84, 86, etc.).

It will be evident therefore, to return to the Old Testament temple,

that in their structure and proportions the temples of Solomon, Ezekiel and Herod successively resume and re-express the essential significance of the tabernacle, just as the hill of Zion on which they stand acquires the attributes and significance of that earlier place of encounter, the sacred mountain. But to appreciate the further significance of the temple it will be necessary briefly to refer to certain mythological conceptions of the sacred dwelling of the gods which were prevalent in various forms throughout the Ancient Near East.

THE MYSTIC MOUNTAIN OF THE NORTH

The idea of the sacred mountain as the place of encounter between Yahweh and his people originates, as I have attempted to show in an earlier article, in the historical encounter at Mount Sinai. Subsequently the idea is transferred to the hill on which Jerusalem stands, and Zion becomes the sacred mountain of Yahweh's dwelling. 'Why do you glower, you high mountains, at the mountain which God has desired for his home?' (Ps. 68. 16). But in later descriptions of Zion other motifs appear, which owe far more, as it seems, to the religious literature of Israel's neighbours. The gods of the various Ancient Near Eastern pantheons were commonly conceived to dwell in a mystic mountain situated in the remote north (perhaps even, as one writer has suggested, 'on the other side of' or 'at the back of' the north). In Ugaritic (i.e. Canaanite) mythology this is actually called 'Mount Zaphon', 'Mount North'. In Babylonian literature it is referred to as the *arallu* mountain. It is, in effect, the Semitic version of the Greek Olympus, a mountain of wonderful beauty and fertility, sparkling with gold and precious stones, where the gods dwell in unending bliss. The description in Ezek. 28 of the 'holy mountain of God', the remote and marvellously fertile and beautiful dwelling where the 'anointed cherub' once 'walked amid stones of fire' is evidently influenced by this mythologem. And the statement in Job 37. 22 that 'out of the north comes gold' seems clearly to presuppose a similar vision of the golden *arallu* mountain in the north. In Hebrew poetry Mount Zion is sometimes thought of as the earthly counterpart of this celestial mountain, and sometimes actually identified with it, as in Ps. 48, 2-3: '... the mountain of his holiness, beautiful in elevation, the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion in the uttermost parts of the north'. Thus in later Hebrew literature foreign mythological motifs are applied to a progressively idealized Zion, and used to express the idea that this sacred mountain of God embodies all that is richest, holiest and most beautiful in the

created order.

But the influence of the 'sacred mountain' mythologem does not end there. In the 'city-state' civilization of ancient Mesopotamia artificial 'sacred mountains' known as *ziggurats* (literally 'towers') were constructed actually within the city walls. This had the effect of situating the point of encounter between heaven, the abode of God, and earth, the dwelling of man, within the city itself. The sloping ramps leading up the sides of the *ziggurat* were intended to reach from earth to heaven. In the story of Jacob's ladder (Gn. 28. 12) what Jacob saw in his dream was not 'a ladder set up on earth with the top of it touching heaven', as the English versions quaintly but inaccurately suggest. *Sullam*, the word translated as 'ladder' here, actually means the vast sloping ramp of a *ziggurat*, the side of a 'sacred mountain'. Again the story of the tower of Babel (Gn. 11. 1 ff.) is intended to refer, in a derisory sense, to the colossal *ziggurat* of Babylon. 'Come, let us build a city and a tower with its top in heaven'. (Gn. 11. 4).

Ziggurats were built in successive stories or stages (often seven in number), converging upon a sanctuary at the summit, the initial point of contact where the god first entered the realm of the earth. Here then the idea of convergence and concentricity reappears in a new form. Now within the Hebrew temple, the great bronze altar of sacrifice was certainly designed as a sort of miniature *ziggurat*, a microcosm of the storied mountain of God. The minute description of the altar in Ezek. 43. 13-17 is probably derived from the earlier altar of Solomon's temple (cf. II Chron. 4. 1). It is built in stages and surmounted with horns. A bas-relief of a *ziggurat* of precisely this type survives from the ruins of Nineveh. This Jewish altar of sacrifice is actually called *har-el*, mountain of God, and its base is referred to as 'bosom of the earth'. It is so high that the priests need steps to climb to its summit, where the sacred fire burns ceaselessly (Lv. 6. 13), transforming the flesh of innumerable victims offered by all Israel into ' . . . a fire-offering, a savour pleasing to Yahweh' (Lv. 1. 9, etc.). The holocausts offered by Noah (Gn. 8. 20 ff.) and by Abraham (Gn. 22. 13) on the tops of sacred mountains, and by the elders of Israel on Mount Sinai in her initial encounter with her God of fire, are continuously renewed on this miniature 'mountain of God' composed, like the mythological *arallu* mountain, of glowing metal; its base is the 'bosom of the earth,' and its summit supports the holy fire, symbol of Yahweh's *kabod* ever present to his people and ever ready to be propitiated by their sacrifices.

THE BUILDING OF GOD'S HOUSE

A further motif which occurs frequently in the religious traditions of the Ancient Near East is the myth of the building of the god's palace. This often comes as the climactic aftermath to his victory over the forces of chaos and death. One of the most striking examples is to be found in the Canaanite epic of Baal and Anat. Baal the conqueror has a sumptuous palace built in his honour. It is designed and built by a sort of divine craftsman or 'demi-urge' named 'Adroit-and-Cunning'. Now in the account of the making of the tabernacle in Exod. 35. 30 ff., we are told of specially selected workmen charismatically endowed with marvellous skill and cunning so that they are able to carry out the divine plan exactly: 'Bezalel and Oholiab, and every wise-hearted man, in whose heart Yahweh has put wisdom and skill to know how to perform all the workmanship for the service of the sanctuary' (Exod. 36. 1). Again, the temple of Solomon is built by human labourers of marvellous skill. These correspond in human and historical terms to the figure of 'Adroit-and-Cunning' in the myth. Again in the myth the materials used to give supreme honour to Baal and to rejoice his heart are gold, silver and cedar-wood. And these are precisely the materials used in Solomon's temple. The account of the building of this temple in I Kgs 5-8 is in fact the counterpart in true historical terms of this Canaanite mythologem. Moreover in the Ancient Near East the design of the temple was commonly thought to have been directly revealed by the god who dwelt in it, so that every detail of its measurements was sacrosanct. If the temple, or any part of it, had been destroyed, it had to be rebuilt on the original site and exactly according to the original plan. The plan of the temple was therefore a sacred document, preserved with meticulous care. The plan of the Hebrew temple of Solomon has been preserved with equal care. The idea of God himself imparting the original plan of his shrine to a chosen leader is vividly expressed in Exod. 25. 9: 'According to all that I show you, the pattern (*tabnit*) of the tabernacle and the pattern of its equipment, so shall you make it', says Yahweh to Moses.

At this point it will not be altogether irrelevant to consider briefly the materials of which the tabernacle was composed. These are enumerated in Exod. 25. 3-4: 'Gold and silver and brass, blue and purple and scarlet, fine linen and goatshair, ramskins dyed red and porpoise-skins, and acacia wood'. Naturally it is not possible to determine the exact significance of each of these materials. But they do appear to fall into four distinct groups. First, a number of elements are characteristic of

rough portable sanctuaries such as the Arabic *utfah* or *qubbah*, tent-shrines of wood and leather designed to be carried on camel-back. Up to relatively recent times shrines of this type were carried on pilgrimages to Mecca, and representations of what appear to be similar wood-and-leather tents have survived from far earlier epochs. The scarlet-dyed skins, the goatshair and acacia wood mentioned in the list of materials are all characteristic of this essentially nomadic type of shrine. It is reasonable to suppose that the tabernacle of the desert period would have been composed more or less exclusively of these materials and would have been of this *utfah* type. The other materials mentioned represent successive stages of idealisation of this relatively simple structure.

The second element in the materials is probably of Canaanite provenance, and was added either in fact or else in the imagination of the idealising writers after the entry into the land. This is the trellis-work of wooden frames known as *qerashim*, a word wrongly translated 'boards' in many English versions. (cf. Exod. 26. 15 ff.). The exact function of this trellis-work in the structure as a whole is exceedingly difficult to determine. It is almost as though it formed a tabernacle within a tabernacle. But once more Canaanite documents provide a probable solution. In Canaanite mythology El, the supreme god, is described as dwelling in a structure of q-r-sh-m (virtually the same word), here apparently designating a sort of arbour or booth of trellis-work. Now in Hebrew thought Yahweh as the sole God of Israel replaces El and many of the glories ascribed to El by his Canaanite devotees are accorded to Yahweh by his people. Thus either in fact or in imagination the *qerashim* booth, the dwelling of the supreme god, has been embodied in the tabernacle. It is as though the Hebrew author were asserting: 'It is Yahweh, *not* El, who dwells in the *qerashim*'.

The third element in the list, the rich hangings of dyed cloth, is most probably of Phoenician provenance and would not have been added to the sanctuary either in fact or imagination before the early monarchy when Phoenician influence—notably that of Hiram of Tyre—began to make itself felt. Finally the metals mentioned, gold and silver and brass, could well have constituted an original element in the shrine, which was subsequently added to and elaborated as the people became more prosperous and as votive offerings increased. A tabernacle embodying all the elements enumerated in the list could well have existed in historical fact at the time of David, but hardly before. In its final stage the tabernacle would have become the royal pavilion of Yahweh bedecked with

all the rich embroidery obtainable from the merchant-princes of Phoenicia, its decoration influenced consciously or unconsciously by Phoenician mythological motifs. Chief among these motifs would have been the cherubim (cf. Exod. 26. 1, 31, etc.). These were monstrous winged beings, hybrid in form and often half man, half beast. They were embroidered on the curtains and veil of the tabernacle and moulded in the metal of the ark-throne. They constituted a body-guard, as it were, to keep ceaseless watch over the shrine of the divine presence and to ward off all that was offensive or alien to Yahweh's holiness.

Now if one were asked to assess the typological significance of all this, one might attempt to state it somewhat as follows. Tabernacle and temple are types of the human body of Christ. 'The Word was made flesh and *tabernacled* amongst us'. As the sanctuary of the old law grew under the hands of craftsmen working in the power of God's Spirit and emerged as an earthly copy of a divinely revealed plan, so the body of Christ is marvellously knit together in the womb of the Virgin under the power of the Holy Spirit through her perfect obedience to the eternal plan of God. Like the original desert tabernacle this human tabernacle is essentially transient, destined to carry its divine occupant through and beyond the wilderness of this world on to a 'new Jerusalem not built with hands'. Like the *qerashim* tabernacle this human body enshrines the supreme God of heaven and earth. As the first tabernacle was decked out with the trappings of royalty after its entry into the old Jerusalem, so the second is endowed with the royal glory of the resurrection as it enters the new. As the ancient sanctuary was surrounded with representations of cherubim, so the human body of Christ is surrounded with hosts of heavenly beings.

THE TEMPLE AS AN ARTIFICIAL PARADISE GARDEN AND MICROCOSM OF THE FERTILE EARTH

A further idea prevalent in the religious thought of the Ancient Near East is the belief that the supreme god dwells in a fertile paradise garden situated at the source of the great cosmic rivers which flow out to fertilize the whole earth. A typical example occurs in Ugaritic literature where the *qerashim* harbour of El, the 'high god' is said to lie 'at the sources of the two floods, in the midst of the headwaters of the two oceans'. This intensely fertile paradise garden is planted with every variety of herb and fruit-tree, and at its centre stands the tree of life. Formal representations of the tree of life with the waters of life issuing

from it are fairly frequent in Mesopotamian inscriptions. Often too a guardian deity or deities are included in the picture. Here then the supreme god dwells at the source of all fruitfulness and life attended by his guardian cherubim. In the biblical account of the garden of Eden these and similar mythological motifs have been borrowed and adapted so as to express the inspired truth. In this garden Yahweh '... makes to grow every tree that is pleasant to look at and good for food, and the tree of life too in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil ... A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers'. (Gn. 2. 9-10). Here too Yahweh is attended by a guardian cherub with lightning for his sword. With this weapon he expels all that is alien and sin-polluted from the divine presence. The cherub of the lightning sword also appears in Mesopotamian inscriptions. Commentators nowadays find a close connection between this account of the garden of Eden in Gn. 2, and the poem entitled 'A Lamentation upon the King of Tyre' in Ezek. 28. 12-19. The imagery of this poem seems to have been drawn to a large extent from a 'myth of the fallen angel' which recurs in various forms in Ancient Near Eastern literature. It may have applied originally to a supreme cherub who dwelt in the primordial paradise garden and guarded it on behalf of the 'high god'. 'You were a pattern of perfection, full of wisdom, marvellous in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, the topaz and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald and the carbuncle. And the gold of which your tabrets and flutes were made was prepared on the day of your creation. You a cherub, anointed and protecting; and I set you to be on the holy mountain of God; you walked in the midst of the stones of fire'. (Ezek. 28. 13-14).

All this has an important bearing on the symbolism of the Hebrew temple. As the dwelling of God and the place of his throne, Zion is conceived to be the centre of the whole earth. In one passage (Ezek. 38. 12) it is actually called the 'navel of the earth', a motif which is greatly elaborated upon in the later Jewish apocrypha (e.g. Jubilees 8. 19). In Jewish mythology a certain flat stone in the temple was believed to cover this 'navel of the earth'. When lifted it disclosed an aperture which led directly down to the vast subterranean ocean of fresh water with which the whole earth (such was the popular belief) was fertilized. In Hebrew thought, then, the temple is the paradisaal source of all fruitfulness whence issue the cosmic 'waters of life', '... a river whose

streams rejoice the city of God, the sanctuary of the dwelling of the Most High' (Ps. 46. 5; cf. Is. 33. 21, Ezek. 47, Joel 4. 18, Zech. 14. 8). As in Mesopotamian and Egyptian temples these cosmic waters are represented symbolically by certain elements in the actual equipment of the Hebrew temple. In Mesopotamian mythology the subterranean reservoir of life-giving water is personified as the god *Apsu*. An immense basin or 'sea' of fresh water placed in the Babylonian temple is actually known as the *apsu*. In the Hebrew temple the great bronze 'sea' described in I Kgs 7. 23 ff. likewise symbolises the subterranean reservoir of the water of life, and gives expression to the belief that the water of life issues from beneath the sanctuary of Yahweh's presence. This 'sea' rests on the backs of twelve oxen (I Kgs 7. 25 ff.), also symbols of fertility and vigour in Semitic thought, and the fact that the oxen look outwards north, south, east and west (I Kgs 7. 26) indicates that the fertility which they support and represent is to radiate out to all parts of the earth. The temple is also equipped with smaller wheeled basins or water-carriers decorated with lions, oxen and cherubim (I Kgs 7. 27 ff.). These are generally considered to symbolise the fertilizing rains. However, both the 'sea' and the basins served a practical purpose too, the former being used for the ablutions of the priests (cf. II Chron. 4. 2-5), the latter for the washing of the sacrificial victims (cf. II Chron. 4. 6). This conception of the temple as the paradisaal source of fertility finds its supreme expression in Ezekiel's vision of the new temple, where a river of healing waters issues '... from under the threshold of the house eastward ... and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, on the south of the altar'. (Ezek. 47. 1). Deepening and broadening as it goes, this life-giving river flows down to the sea, 'healing' its waters and vivifying all creation. On its banks grows '... every tree for food; their leaf shall not wither and their fruit shall not fail. It shall bring forth new fruit every month because its waters issue out of the sanctuary' (47. 12). Thus the paradise of the renewed earth is to grow out of the paradise of the temple.

The actual decorations on the temple walls and doors also give expression to this idea that it is thought of as a sort of formal paradise garden constructed by human artifice, the earthly counterpart of a heavenly exemplar. Outside the porch of the temple stand the two great free-standing pillars known as Jachin and Boaz (I Kgs 7. 21), which perhaps in Hebrew thought represent the pillars on which the earth rests. (Similar pillars outside pagan temples were probably fertility symbols representing the male and female deities respectively). The

capitals of these pillars are decorated with emblems of fertility, pomegranates and 'lilies' or 'lotus blossoms' (I Kgs 7. 19, 20, 22). The walls of the 'holy place' and the doors leading respectively from the porch into the holy place, and from the holy place into the holy of holies are decorated with a motif of palm-trees, cherubim and open flowers. Here then all the elements of the paradise garden are artificially reproduced: the fertilizing waters, the fruit-trees and plants, and the cherubim. But what of the supreme guardian of Ezekiel's vision, the 'anointed and protecting cherub' who was 'set in the holy mountain of God'. who wore 'every precious stone for his covering' and 'walked amid the stones of fire' in 'Eden, the garden of God'? This figure too finds its earthly counterpart in the temple of Zion. That, surely, is the significance of the High Priest and his vestments. Arrayed in his robes he is, like the supreme cherub, 'a pattern of perfection, marvellous in beauty'. The pectoral on his breast is composed of precisely the same stones, sardius, topaz, diamond, etc., as those with which the cherub is covered, and they and the rest of his vestments are fashioned under divine inspiration in preparation for his investiture. Like the cherub the High Priest is *anointed* and *protecting*. He receives the numinous impact of Yahweh's presence miraculously upon his own person, and goes unscathed. He walks in the midst of the stones of fire. In fact, having constituted this formalised paradise with human craftsmanship for his dwelling, this God of fire and mystic life chooses a human figure from among his people and 'creates' him too into his ministering cherub. The mystic lyricism of the description of the High Priest Simon, son of Onias, in Ecclus 50. 1-21 confirms this impression. All the beauty of everything that exists, sun, moon, stars, the rainbow, the cedar of Lebanon, the fire of incense, etc.—all these are concentrated and epitomised in the beauty of the High Priest in his robes. 'He shone in his days as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at the full. And as the sun when it shineth, so did he shine in the temple of God. And as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds, and as the flower of roses in the days of the spring, and as the lilies that are on the brink of the water, and as the sweet smelling frankincense in the time of summer. As a bright fire, and frankincense burning in the fire. As a massy vessel of gold, adorned with every precious stone. As an olive tree budding forth, and a cypress tree rearing itself on high, when he put on the robe of glory, and was clothed with the perfection of power' (Ecclus 50. 6-11).

THE EARTH AS YAHWEH'S MACROCOSMIC TEMPLE-TOWER

In the Hebrew temple, as we have seen, the elements of the cosmos are symbolically represented: the pillars supporting the world, the cosmic waters and rains, the fruitfulness they produce, etc. In this sense the temple is a microcosm of the fertile earth. Now in the vision of the temple priests the converse is also true, that the fertile earth is Yahweh's temple-tower or *ziggurat*, the macrocosm of the temple. This appears clearly in the 'first creation narrative' (Gen. 1-2. 4a). To appreciate the significance of this poem it is essential to recapture the 'architectural' mentality characteristic of this priestly tradition. The glory of Yahweh is reflected and expressed by the ordered and symmetrical proportions of his shrine. Just as order and symmetry appear in the construction of the tabernacle and temple by Yahweh's servants, so too they appear in the construction of the earth by Yahweh himself. The most perfect symmetry is achieved by a combination of ten, seven and three, the 'holy' numbers, in the proportions of the structure as a whole. Now in the first creation narrative this is conveyed obliquely by the structure of the poem itself. It is composed almost entirely of a number of formal refrains, each of which occurs either ten seven or three times in the course of the poem. Thus 'And God said . . .' occurs exactly ten times, 'And it was so' seven times, 'And God saw that it was good' seven times, the description of the works seven times, the recording of the days seven times, the giving of names three times, the divine blessing three times. The works themselves are arranged in a schematic form in such a way that the works of the first, second and third days correspond respectively to the works of the fourth, fifth and sixth. Thus, the light on the first day corresponds to the planets on the fourth; the firmament of heaven dividing the waters of the second day corresponds to the birds and fish, the denizens of heaven and the waters, of the fifth; the dry land and the green herb of the third day corresponds to the creeping things, beasts, and man of the sixth day, for these inhabit the dry land and have the green herb for their food. Moreover the description of each particular creative work is fitted into a stereotyped formal framework, the essential elements of which may be summarized as follows: The opening phrase 'And God said . . .' is followed by a command, 'Let there be . . .', followed by the carrying out of the command, 'And it was so', followed by the approval of God, 'And God saw that it was good'. The whole is concluded by a statement of time: 'It was evening, it was morning, day one', etc. This formal framework recurs, with certain essential modifications, in the 'architectural' accounts of the

construction of the tabernacle.

What is the basic vision underlying all this formalisation? It appears to be the interpretation of an upholder of the priestly tradition writing from the perspective of the exile. Behind him the Jerusalem temple, the centre, probably, of his whole life, lies in ruins. About him his fellow Israelites, dangerously impressed by the splendour of the Babylonian temple-tower, need to be awakened to a new vision of the glory of Yahweh's dwelling. So the priestly writer composes a poem showing that the whole earth is Yahweh's temple-tower, constructed by himself alone with marvellous symmetry and order. Myths of the building of temple-towers in seven stages or stories were well-known in Babylon. 'See', says the priestly writer in effect, 'Yahweh built the entire world as his temple-tower in seven days'. Babylonian temples were decorated with lifeless representations of living creatures, and occupied by lifeless images of the gods. 'See', says the priestly writer of Israel, 'Yahweh has decorated his temple-tower with trees and fruit and living creatures that are *alive*. And at the centre and summit of the whole glorious structure he has set not a lifeless image, but a living and breathing image of himself, man'. Thus the vision which he had previously won from the symmetry, order and decoration of the temple is expanded and reapplied to the cosmos of which the temple was a microcosm.

THE NEW JERUSALEM AND THE NEW TEMPLE OF THE KABOD

We have seen the sanctuary of the *kabod*, the visible manifestation of God's presence to his people, grow from a tabernacle into a resplendent temple, and move from Mount Sinai to Mount Zion. Set on this shining 'mountain of God' the temple becomes a point of radiance and convergence for all creaturehood. 'In the last days the mountain of Yahweh's house shall be established in the top of the mountains and raised up above the hills, and all the Gentiles shall stream to it', Isaiah had predicted (Is. 2. 2). 'You are the light of the world', says our Lord to his disciples, 'A city set above the mountains cannot be hidden' (Mt. 5. 14). 'Sir, we would see Jesus', say certain Greeks to the apostles; they have arrived at the holy mountain of Zion just as our Lord is about to enter upon his passion. And immediately he replies to their request: 'The hour is come for the Son of Man to be *glorified*' (Jn. 12. 20, 21, 23). This is the hour, so often predicted, when his own body is to become the new temple of the *kabod*, the glory, a second paradise, microcosm of the fertile earth, containing within itself the 'navel' of the earth from which the sweet waters flow out to heal and quicken all the world. This

last point becomes supremely important for St John. It is he who records, with every possible emphasis, that cry of Jesus at the feast of Tabernacles, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. As the scripture says, "out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water".' (Jn 7. 37-38). New Testament scholars have recently established that our Lord was here referring to his own body as the source of the living water, and not, as used to be thought, to the body of the believer. But the context of this saying is all-important. Jesus cries out in the temple itself on the last and greatest day of the feast of Tabernacles. This particular day is known as 'the feast of the joy of water-drawing'. At the supreme moment a priest leaves the temple precincts with a golden pitcher in his hand to draw water from the spring of Gihon at the foot of the holy mountain. Then he returns amid triumphant acclamations to pour the water out before the God of Israel. This ceremony is meant to induce Yahweh to pour out the life-giving autumn rains upon his holy land. And at this moment, in the popular belief, the waters of the subterranean lake rise up beneath the 'navel' stone of the temple and issue forth anew to irrigate all the earth. This is the background to the cry of Jesus. Earlier he has refused to go up to *this* feast (*eis ten heorten tauten*) because his *time* has not yet come (7. 8). But on the last and greatest day of the feast he is there, offering to all who believe his own *time* or *hour* as the new 'feast of the joy of water drawing', his own body as the new temple, his own 'belly' as the eternal source of the life-giving waters. And when the hour comes, the hour in which the glory of his Father shines out from the temple of his crucified body, we see that promise fulfilled. 'One of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance and there came forth blood and water; and he that saw has borne witness and his witness is true . . .' (19. 34). It is the river of life-giving water foretold long before by Ezekiel ' . . . flowing down from beneath the right side of the temple' (Ezek. 47. 1), to heal and quicken the whole world. For it is given to us believers to see not only a human body ravaged and crucified, but the new temple of God's glory, a new point of radiance and convergence set up on a new 'holy mountain'. For us that crucified figure is at once victim and lord of heaven and earth, living eternally in his own death, 'a Lamb standing, as though slain' (Rev. 5. 6). About his throne the powers of heaven and earth are ranged in an ordered hierarchy: the four living creatures (Rev. 4. 7), the twenty-four elders (4. 4), the myriads of angels (5. 11), the forty-four thousand of the sons of Israel (7. 4, ff.), the innumerable multitude of the Gentiles who have 'washed their robes and made them white in

the blood of the Lamb' (7. 9-14). For the Lamb a new Jerusalem is created, 'coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband . . . Behold the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things are passed away.' (21. 2-4). One by one we recognize the features of this city. It is set on a great high mountain (21. 10) and has 'the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal' (21. 11). The perfect symmetry of this city (21. 16-17) expresses the flawless perfection of God, as do the materials of which it is composed. 'The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious jewel . . . the twelve gates were twelve pearls . . . *And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb*'. (21. 18-23). Here too is ' . . . the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations . . . ' (22. 1-2).

Such is the city and the temple towards which we make pilgrimage. We await the encounter in which 'God himself will wipe away every tear from our eyes' (21. 4), and the communion which is 'the marriage supper of the Lamb' (19. 9). Meanwhile our temple is his crucified body, our river of life the blood and water that issue from his side. 'He that testifies to these things says "Indeed I come quickly. Amen". Come, Lord Jesus'.

St Augustine on the Trinity—II

EDMUND HILL, O.P.

In his introduction to the *De Trinitate*, Augustine stated his plan, as we saw in the first article,¹ of beginning by establishing what he calls the *initium fidei*, the starting-point of faith, which he does by showing that the mystery is revealed in Scripture; and then of going on to give reasons for—*reddere rationem*, which is better translated, perhaps 'to account for'—the one true God being a Trinity, and for the rightness of saying that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are of one substance or essence. It has been commonly held that the first part of this programme occupies Bks I-VII, in which the dogma is discussed, and that the second part is undertaken in Bks VIII-XV, in which Augustine is thought to look for a sort of proof of the mystery in the created image of the Trinity which is man.

It is indeed true that the whole work divides itself obviously into two parts, Bks I-VII and VIII-XV. But in my opinion it is doubtful whether this division is the one Augustine indicates in his introduction. The assumption that it is seems to arise from a misunderstanding of his distinction between faith and reason. It is most important to realise that it is not at all the same distinction as the one scholastic theologians make between faith and reason. The distinction we have grown used to is a distinction between truths of faith and truths of reason; between what we could not know unless God revealed it to us, to be taken on faith, and what we can learn for ourselves by the use of our unaided reason; between theology and all the natural sciences, between theology and philosophy.

St Augustine made no distinction between theology and philosophy. He distinguished between the true philosophy, which is orthodox Christianity, and what he often called false *theologies* such as the doctrines of the Platonists and other pagan philosophers. And it was only the true philosophy that he was interested in, the truth without further qualification. It was with respect to this truth, the truth of the Christian religion, that he made his distinction. His point is that this truth can never be *understood* unless it is first *believed*. His distinction between faith and reason is really one between faith and understanding. These are not

¹*Life of the Spirit*, June, 1961.

parallel attitudes of mind towards distinct objects, but successive, or rather progressive attitudes of mind towards one object, divine truth.

Thus in the present instance, he is not saying that first we must establish that the mystery of the Trinity has been revealed and is therefore an object of faith; and that then we will go on, for the fun of it, to see whether it is not also something that we can work out for ourselves without recourse to revelation, as an object of natural reason. He is not wondering whether besides a theology of the Trinity we may not also construct a philosophy of the Trinity. He is saying that some people—meaning the Arians, principally—construct theories about the Trinity which purport to give a rational explanation of the mystery, without considering sufficiently that it is a mystery which Scripture has proposed for our *belief*. They neglect the starting-point of faith. St Augustine wholeheartedly approves the intellectual urge to try and understand the mystery, but he is adamant that it cannot be achieved independently of faith, which accepts the revelation of Scripture. For him Scripture is always very precisely the corollary of faith.

Thus the plan he announces at the beginning of the *De Trinitate* does not take him out of the field of what we nowadays call theology at all. It simply states his theological procedure; first the starting-point of faith, that is a detailed examination of the scriptural revelation of the dogma; then reason, that is the attempt to give a logical, conceptual expression to the dogma, and also to show that it is not at odds with the demands of reason. It is this that he goes on to undertake in Bks v-vii. And it is significant that he concludes Bk vii, after a long and difficult discussion of the word 'person', as follows: 'If this cannot be grasped by understanding, let it be held by faith, until he shines in our minds who said by the prophet, "Unless you believe, you shall not understand".' This is St Augustine's favourite quotation from the Old Testament; it is a mistranslation, from the Greek version, of Isaiah 7. 9, one of the most inspired mistranslations that have ever been perpetrated.

Also towards the end of this Bk vii Augustine begins to introduce references to the image of the Trinity in man, thus preparing the way for the second half of the great work in Bks viii-xv. It might be objected that on the interpretation here given of the plan he announced at the beginning of Bk i, these last eight books are left with the rather unsatisfactory status of an afterthought. Well, in a work that took the author the best part of twenty years to complete, it is always possible that they were. But their construction harmonizes with that of the first

part, reflecting it, as in a mirror, in reverse; for he begins in Bks VIII and IX with rational arguments and considerations, that follow on naturally from the previous books in tone, and then he returns once more to what scripture has to say, this time about man as made 'to our image and likeness'. This brings me to my last objection to the alternative interpretation of Augustine's faith-reason plan, which is that the last books of the *De Trinitate* are quite as full of scriptural revelation, quite as dependent on the authority of the Bible as the first four. St Augustine is not looking for a proof of the Trinity by speculation that will perhaps bypass revelation and make faith unnecessary. He is examining *in extenso* another datum of revelation, namely that man is made after God's image and likeness, to see what light it throws on the principal truth of revelation that the one God is a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The light it does throw is considerable, but he never for one moment supposes that it is adequate and comprehensive.

This may all seem a disproportionately long discussion of a very small point. But for a proper understanding of what St Augustine has to say to us it is necessary to realise that the perspective, the point of view from which he looked at our common religion, was very different from the point of view bequeathed to us by the scholastic tradition. Indeed the chief value of Augustine is that he shows us that there is another point of view, another perspective. In substance what he says in Bks V-VII is the same as what current manuals of theology say about the dogma of the Trinity. Indeed they derive from St Augustine *via* St Thomas. (What he has said in Bks I-IV finds next to no place in current manuals at all). But the way he looks at it is different. He does not regard the matter of these books as setting out the dogma of the Trinity, the object of our faith. It is scripture that does that, and the conciliar definitions which formulate the revelation of Scripture and the faith of the Church. Having displayed that revelation and vindicated that faith in the first four books, he goes on to show, against the Arians, that it is not contrary to reason, and to discuss the ever-so-complicated question of how we are going to talk about it. Thus what for current theological text-books is the exposition of the mystery and dogma of the Trinity, is no more for Augustine than a logical and linguistic supplement to his exegetical statement of the scriptural revelation of the mystery; an important, indeed indispensable supplement, but still only a supplement. He does not consider, in these Bks V-VII, that he is talking about the Trinity but only that he is talking about talking about the Trinity.

Thus to say that there are three divine persons tells us nothing, in Augustine's opinion, about God. For the word 'person' in this matter is nothing more than a word; the most convenient—or rather the least inconvenient—word for marshalling and ordering the words in which revelation speaks to us about God. To say that there is one God, that the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and that the Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Father and the Holy Ghost is neither the Father nor the Son—these statements do tell us something about God. They state the object of our faith. But it is only when they have already been made and accepted that the statement 'There are three persons in the one God' has any meaning, and can be taken as equivalently, by a convention of theological language, saying the same thing. For the word 'person' is nothing more than a device. Scripture tells us about a certain three, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We ask the question 'Three what?', and we are stuck for an answer, such is the inadequacy of human speech for expressing our inadequate thoughts about divine things. Eventually we say 'Three persons', not, as Augustine enigmatically but profoundly remarks, in order to say just that, but in order not to say nothing at all.

We might indeed just as well have said 'Three substances', which is in fact what the Greeks do say and with perfect orthodoxy; they say 'three *hypostaseis*', the Greek word *hypostasis* being the exact linguistic equivalent of the Latin *substantia*. The fact that the Greeks say, equivalently, 'One essence, three substances', while the Latins say, 'One substance, three persons', shows that we are concerned immediately with words only, talking about talking, and only at one remove with the reality, talking about the triune God. And these linguistic-device words, 'person', 'substance', 'essence', are introduced in the course of our discussion, not of the divine mystery itself, but of the reality-words, 'God', 'Father', 'Son', 'Holy Ghost', etc., with which we talk about the divine mystery directly. The importance of this discussion is that unless we examine critically the language in which we talk about God, it will seduce us into misbelief about God. For instance, if we assume that words mean exactly the same thing in exactly the same way when used of God as when used of men or other creatures, we will have a false idea of God as a sort of super-man. We will think of God as anthropomorphic, because the words we use about him normally have anthropomorphic associations. Because there are no words we can use about God which have not previously been used about men and creatures, which have not indeed been formed in order to talk about men and creatures,

there is no avoiding anthropomorphic *language* about God (unless indeed you wish to substitute chemico- or physicomorphic language, and talk about God in terms of energy or atoms, which does not seem much of an improvement on talking about him in terms of man and morals); but by examining that language—and distinguishing, for example, between its natural and its artificial meaning, or between its use in plain statements and in metaphors—we can avoid falling into anthropomorphic *belief*.

The Arians, who were the misbelievers Augustine had in mind, were far too sophisticated to make this mistake. They were trapped by a valid, indeed central theological axiom which however is not so absolute as they thought it—no axiom ever is. This principle declares that whatever can be said or understood about God does not say accident but says substance (the Greek for ‘substance’ in this case would be ‘essence’). We are here talking in terms of Aristotle’s categories, which were his analysis of language. When we say ‘Mr Krushchev is a man’, or ‘Mr K. is human’, which means the same thing, we are saying substance, because such words as ‘man’ and ‘human’ in this context signify quite simply what the thing you are talking about is, not what-like it is, how it is, how big, where, when, why, whence, or whither; but simply what. It is a man, not a horse, a demon, or a dinosaur. But when we say ‘Mr Khrushchev is a Russian, a communist, intelligent, ugly, powerful’, we are saying accidents, we are saying qualities of various kinds that belong to, but are not the substance of, this man-substance. They go with him, or happen to him, which is why they are called accidents, from the Latin word ‘to happen’. ‘Mr K. is short and fat’ also says an accident, the accident of quantity. And other things we can say about him say what he does, what he undergoes, how he behaves, etc., all saying various accidents about the one substance. All these accidents are variable within certain limits, without affecting the identity of the substance. Thus this and any other human substance, any material substance, is both complex and changeable, in virtue of its accidents.

But God is neither complex nor changeable. Nothing happens to him, and he has no quality, quantity, position, place, or time. Thus when we say things about God which when said of any other subject would imply variability and complexity, which normally in fact signify accidents, we have to trim their signification to this unique subject and say that in this case they do not say accidents, because nothing can happen to or be added to or taken away from God. They do not say

accidents, they say substance. We say that God is good and wise and just, but these are not qualities which he has, as they are in the case of a good and wise and just man. God is wisdom and goodness and justice, he is his attributes. He is also his actions, his knowledge and will, his knowing and loving, his speaking and listening, his punishing and forgiving.

Now on the basis of this axiom the Arians argued as follows: Everything that can be truly said of God says substance; 'being unbegotten' can be said of the Father, and 'being begotten' can be said of the Son. But 'begotten' and 'unbegotten' are different and mutually exclusive; therefore the Father and the Son are different and mutually exclusive substances.

Augustine's answer is that there is a third possibility. He grants that nothing that can be said of God says accident, but he affirms that not everything that can be said of him says substance. Scripture uses some words about God, of which 'Father' and 'Son' are the obvious examples, which say not substance but relationship, reference to another. Such words only have meaning with reference to an opposite term of reference. When applied to human subjects such words do in fact say accidents, because they necessarily imply change, development, time. A man *becomes* a father at a certain point of time; the fact that he is and always has been a son is as much as to say that he had a beginning in time. But no such change, no such beginning in time is implied when we call God Father and call God Son, for the divine begetting and being begotten is eternal and from eternity.

So the distinction in our divine vocabulary is not one between words that say accidents and words that say substance, since no words in this matter say accidents. The only distinction we have is between words that say something of the subject in itself and those that say something of it with reference to another. It is only as signified by this second class of words that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are really distinct from each other. The Father, as father, cannot be identical with the Son, because it is meaningless to call the two opposite terms of a relationship identical—it dissolves the relationship. But as signified by the first group of words, such as 'God', 'good', 'wise', 'loving', etc., Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are identical; they are each and they are all the one God, the one divine goodness, wisdom, love. They are, in the language of theological convention, one substance, one essence. So we can call the distinction in our divine vocabulary one between substance words and relationship words.

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one substance and three—what? Persons, we say. But we can now begin to see the problematical nature of this word. For as we normally use it, it signifies its subject in itself, and not with reference to something else. To say 'Mr K. is a person' tells us nothing whatever of his relationship with others. And indeed we talk about God, with impeccable orthodoxy, as 'a person'. Our God is a personal God, we say, and we are not usually thinking about God as three when we say it, but about God as one. And yet we say 'three persons', because we have to say three something, in order to affirm our faith in the real and not merely conceptual distinction between the divine three.

A grasp of the distinction between substance words and relationship words is essential for any understanding—and it can never be more than pitifully inadequate—of the mystery of the Trinity. But to make the distinction is only to raise yet more baffling problems about the words in which the revelation is couched which will have to be deferred until the next article. Meanwhile it will be well to close with a repetition of Augustine's words at the end of Bk VII: 'If for the sake of carrying on discussion we wish to admit the use of the plural, and to say three persons or three substances (in the Greek terminology), in order to have some answer to the question "three what?", let us avoid ever thinking in terms of bulk and spacial intervals and qualitative differences of even the least degree; let there be neither confusion of persons nor any such distinction as implies any inequality. And if this cannot be grasped by understanding, let it be held by faith, until he shines in our minds who said through the prophet, "Unless you believe, you shall not understand".'

Reviews

EACH HIS OWN TYRANT, by Wingfield Hope; Sheed and Ward, 8s. 6d.

The two case-histories presented in this book are typical of people we must have all come across; 'Alice' who fails to enter into adult relationship with others because she was starved of love in childhood, and 'Hugh' who finds an otherwise happy marriage threatened by the tensions he introduces, unconscious that he is still reacting against the over-protective mother of his earlier years.

In each case the release from this tyranny comes from talking over the business at length with understanding and genuinely loving people; in the more difficult case of 'Alice', these are the people who run a Catholic Home of Rest; with Hugh, it is his wife who instinctively knows what to do.

The cases have been built up from fact—we are told (and may be grateful to know) that the Home of Rest does exist, and perhaps can guess that the author's insight into these matters has been gained by working there—but they are presented in the form of fiction. This gives them the life which factual case-histories often lack, since the necessary details for a coherent picture can all be given; the essential truth of what is being said here comes home to the reader in a quite natural way. We may well have realised speculatively that failure of integration in adults is due to some childish element that still remains as a result of earlier maladjustment, and realised too that patient listening and love can bring about a cure; here we are *shown* that it is so.

The book can be especially recommended to priests, so much of whose work consists in 'counselling' (to use the convenient American phrase) penitents and others with real difficulties that yet do not demand the attention of a professional analyst. Technical works (such as the excellent *Moral Problems Now* by Hagmaier and Gleeson, brought out by the same publishers last year) are necessary, but so is the imaginative impact of a Wingfield Hope. And all who have any connection with religious life will be interested in the alternative sequel given to the story of 'Alice', in which she enters a convent with all her self-centred self-righteousness, and might have turned into an unhappy and frustrated nun, but for the incident which takes her to the Home of Rest, to learn about herself, and so learn the ordinary human charity which is also true religion.

LAURENCE BRIGHT, O.P.

DO DOGMAS CHANGE?, by Henri Rondet, S.J.; translated by Dom Mark Pontifex; Burns and Oates, Faith and Fact Books, 8s. 6d.

For two reasons, it is more than usually difficult to write popularly about the development of doctrine. First, even to see the problem of development demands a knowledge of the history of Christian teaching greater than can be presumed in the general public. Second, there is not so far available any satisfactory technical treatment of the question on which a populariser might draw. Such a writer must therefore first educate his readers into seeing a problem, and then depend largely on his own skill in order to present an acceptable solution of it.

Père Rondet succeeds splendidly in the first task, and fails sadly in the second. He begins soundly by distinguishing between the progress of revelation, the history of theology, and the development of doctrine. Then he presents a 12-page outline of the history of doctrine, taking us swiftly through the Trinitarian and Christological Councils, the Pelagian controversies, the heresies pro-

duced by the renaissances of the ninth and twelfth centuries, the discussions of the *filioque* and of purgatory at Florence, and later definitions from Trent to 1950. Naturally, we arrive rather breathless at the end of this travelogue from Nicea to the Vatican: but we get our wind back in the excellent next chapter entitled 'Three Examples of Development'. In discussing the first of his examples—the doctrine of the particular judgment and of the possibility of enjoying the beatific vision before the return of Christ—Père Rondet displays his great talents as a historian of ideas. He illustrates his theme with quotations from Augustine, Ambrose, Bernard, John XXII and Benedict XII: quotations of just the right size, neither so short as to distort nor so long as to distract. At the end of this chapter no reader can be in doubt about the nature and gravity of the problem of development; though it is perhaps a pity that the author did not choose one of his examples from the field of ethics—the changing attitude of Catholics to slavery or to usury, for example.

The next chapter deals with the causes of development, of which Père Rondet lists five: heresy (as in the development of Trinitarian doctrine as a result of Arianism); theological reflection (e.g. St Anselm's theory of the Redemption); the piety of the faithful (as in the development of Mariology); the influence of the liturgy (seen in the appeal to the rites of infant baptism against the Pelagians); and the everyday teaching of the bishops in encyclicals and pastorals.

The final chapter is entitled 'The theory of development' and it is to this that we look for Père Rondet's solution to the problems he has set his reader. Instead, we are given more history: Gregory Nazianzen, Vincent of Lerins, Luther, Lessing, Kant, Hegel, Schleiermacher, Sabatier, Harnack, Loofs, Seeberg, Günther and Loisy flash past. Newman's *Essay* is patiently summarised, and there is some good criticism of inadequate accounts of development. (Two examples: the type of theory which consists merely in the production of similes, such as the oak and the acorn, or the child and the man; and the 'secret tradition' theory, which conjures up a picture of Linus on his deathbed whispering to Cletus '... and then she was assumed into heaven. But whatever you do, don't let this get into the papers'.) But for his final solution of the problem of what is meant by saying that a doctrine such as the Immaculate Conception was implicitly revealed before the death of the last apostle, Père Rondet offers us merely two quotations, one from Journet and one from Gy. We are told that the making explicit of a truth implicitly revealed 'occurs in conformity with a logic which is intrinsic, rigorous, and unescapable'. But this logical process 'takes place wholly in the night of faith'; it accords not with what we call logic but with a 'logic of God' which is above ours, different from it in kind, and which 'goes beyond the purely rational expression which we instinctively try to give it'.

On the face of it, this is dangerous playing with words. One wants to know more about this 'logic of God'. Does it, for example, include the law of non-contradiction? If not, then 'the logic of God' is just a politer name for double-think, and there is no reason why it might not be possible to see 'in the night of

faith' that murder was implicitly permitted by the Fifth Commandment, or that Christ did not rise from the dead. If so, then what makes it different in kind from our logic? And in any case, how are we to find out *what* laws it contains?

On the whole, the book is easy to read, though there is the occasional re-sounding tautology—for example: 'The present, fruit of the past, is pregnant with a future which in its turn will become present and then past'. Père Rondet's style seems to have embarrassed the translator, so that in places the English version obscures the sense of the original more effectively than it masks its idiom.

ANTHONY KENNY

DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES, by Karl Barth; translated by Marguerite Wieser; S.C.M., 12s. 6d.

Karl Barth is said by many to be the greatest theologian of this age, but what is certain is that none can really claim the title of theologian unless he has considered and wrestled with the searching questions which Barth has been putting to Christianity for the last forty years.

But Karl Barth is more than this. In the book before us he is seen as a preacher, and not just preacher in the sense of lecturer or reader of learned papers, but as a pastoral preacher, and one preaching to an audience of critical and sceptical nature. The short sermons contained in this book were in fact preached to the prisoners in the gaol at Basel.

Amongst many other qualities they have one which strikes the reader, and certainly should strike the would-be preacher, as outstanding and of fundamental importance. This is that all his moral teaching springs from and depends upon a theological and doctrinal presentation. What he is out above all to show is the great and mysterious fact that God has spoken to us in his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, and that it is through him that we are saved. And although perhaps one must say that one feels his theological position making him give insufficient weight and significance to human nature as such, nevertheless it is because of their firm theological rooting that his moral 'dos' and 'don'ts' go home, as they went home so successfully to that original and critical audience.

Not only will this book give a picture of a great mind engaged—and yes, perhaps even fulfilling itself—in true evangelism, but it could also be a great help to any wishing to devote their own lives in the same way.

GILES HIBBERT, O.P.

READING THE WORD OF GOD, by Lawrence Dannemiller, s.s.; Burns and Oates, 21s.

There is a most welcome increase lately in books on scripture by Catholic scholars, but they do not seem to have led to any significant increase in Bible

reading as opposed to mere interest in the Bible. To some, unfortunately, books on the Bible seem more interesting than the Bible itself. Fr Dannemiller has put us greatly in his debt in giving us a book which leads us directly to the sacred text.

The main body of the book is a sort of lectionary in which we are given 150 units of scripture to look up and read. Each unit, which takes about 15 minutes, comprises three (sometimes four) main passages to be read by lectors, with shorter texts mostly from the psalms interspersed for reading in chorus. The units are for group use, with a leader, three principal readers, and a number of others. The leader announces each passage and reads an introduction; each unit is concluded with a prayer which gathers what has been read into a petition, affirmation of faith, or act of contrition.

The units start with the creation, and leading through the Fall, the call of the Chosen People, take us through the whole sweep of the history of salvation, the incarnate Life, on into the Church. Then comes life in the Church—the sacraments, our Lady, the apostles, prayer, the virtues, the commandments, sin, ending with the Last Things. However, often even individual units give a whole vista of a biblical theme. Thus 'Christ the Lamb of God' starts with a reading from Exodus about the Passover Lamb. The second reading is St John the Baptist pointing out our Lord as the Lamb of God, and the third takes us to the blessedness of those saved by the Lamb in the Apocalypse. The concluding prayer is a threefold recitation of the *Agnus Dei*, linking us with the mass. The very titles of other units gives some idea of their richness: 'The presence of God in the cloud', 'Christ the New Adam', 'Christ the Temple of God', 'The Church, the Ark of Salvation', 'The Church as a Vineyard', 'Mary, the daughter of Sion', 'Priesthood'.

The juxtaposition of different parts gives a wonderful impression of the unity of scripture, and helps us to acquire the 'feel' of the Bible. It throws into relief the unity of God's purpose in redemptive history, enabling us to see the wood for the trees. No one can now complain of scripture as an impenetrable jungle. Then also it brings out the different literary forms in a far more convincing way than any commentary. (A commentary explaining a literary form reminds me of a man explaining a joke.)

I have tried out several units with training college and university students. Various things emerged: both the lections and the choral readings must be well prepared—lack of preparation takes a great part of the value away. Perseverance is required; first impressions did not generate immediate enthusiasm. The time taken to find the choral readings would be an obstacle to the successful use of this book at our Sunday evening services. The congregation would have to be well drilled over a period of time. If a book could be produced just giving in full the texts to be recited together (like a *Liber Usualis*, without the epistles and gospels), congregational use would be more of a practicable proposition—although something would be lost in the people not handling an actual Bible. However, Fr Dannemiller has given us a magnificent spiritual feast, opening

up immense treasures, and it deserves a serious effort on our part to make it our own.

R. A. NOEL

CHURCH ORDER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, by Eduard Schweizer; S.C.M. Press, 16s.

This latest translation in the *Studies in Biblical Theology* series (No. 32) is an important contribution to the contentious debate on the ordering of the early Church. Professor Schweizer shows reverence, scholarship and clarity in his study. Although his arguments are on the strongly Protestant lines one would naturally expect from a former minister of the Reformed Church of Switzerland, this book confirms the respect which his earlier studies have already earned him. His explicit concern here is not so much with the historical development of the Church as with what he calls the 'theological problem of how the Church understood itself, and how it expressed that understanding in its order'. Church history, he says, can help in the task of interpretation, but it cannot absolve us from constantly returning to the source in scripture; for it may be that the history of the Church reflects its *misunderstanding* of its own nature and function. After an opening chapter justifying reliance almost exclusively on scripture (oral tradition as a source is implicitly discounted), Schweizer examines the conception of the Church held by Jesus himself and also by the primitive Church in Jerusalem, before leading us, in the main part of the book, through a fairly detailed treatment of the views on Church order exhibited by the various parts of the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers. A shorter second part of the book contains studies of particular aspects of the scriptural problem, such as the notions of office, charismatic ministries and apostolic succession.

The New Testament contains two diverging lines on which the conception of the Church developed, Schweizer believes. On one line, Luke's recognition that the Church is the *subject* of a history, filling out the time between the resurrection and the parousia, led to further development in the Pastoral Epistles. Here, as in Luke, the Church is seen as living through an extended history while awaiting the coming of the Lord; but its own existence it now feels to be a static one rather than a developing historical factor. Now that it is firmly established, it is the Church's function to remain as it is and to hold on to what has been attained: it is primarily a guarantor of the truth and a custodian of right doctrine. Timothy and Titus are appointed as reliable and orthodox bearers of the Word. Schweizer sees this trend towards consolidation extended to the ordered structure of the Church in the First Letter of Clement to Corinth. Here he discerns a hierarchy of non-charismatic ministry that is purely technical in character, since this is all that is required for being reliable and free from risk. This line of development is characterized by loss of touch with the risen Christ, and by an over-valuation of office and order that leads to separation between an active priesthood and a passive laity.

At the extreme of the other branch of thought in the New Testament, Schweizer places St John's epistles. Here the Church is seen as belonging exclusively to the risen Lord, in its faith and life taken right out of time and history; it is set free from the world, but remains a witness to the world as a light in the darkness. No Christian needs anyone other than the Spirit to teach him. There are neither offices, nor even different charismata, nor any need for a hierarchical order in the Church. There is only direct union with God through the Spirit who comes to every individual.

These two lines of thought about the Church are clearly reflected in early credal formulae in the New Testament. (On this aspect, readers are referred to Schweizer's earlier book *Lordship and Discipleship*, which appeared in English in the same series, No. 28. See review in *Life of the Spirit* for June, 1960). The first view, which sees the Church as making its historical way through the world, is characterized by cultic passages that look back to the cross and resurrection (e.g. I Cor. 15. 3-5). The other is shown in formulations which look 'up' to the heavenly Lord, and relate to his incarnation and exaltation in glory (e.g. the hymn I Tim. 3. 16). These two theological standpoints naturally lead to corresponding views of Church order—on the one hand a human hierarchical despotism (which Schweizer ascribes to Rome), and on the other anarchy. The proper, mediate course for the Church, he holds, is to conform itself to the influence of both the freedom and the faithfulness of God, to the exclusion of neither. A definite order is necessary, but it must never become an inflexible master. All believers share in Christ's priesthood: there is no laity. Each member is to minister according to his gift. The Church is to appoint its ministers by assessing the charisms God has granted to each individual, and decide the limits of each ministry accordingly. Beyond this there is no further relevance of 'office' in the Church.

Our thanks are certainly due to the author for his useful examination of the divergent trends in the New Testament. But it is perhaps open to doubt whether the division is in fact as deep as he believes. It is true, for example, that John's epistles contain little sign of a definite structure in the Church; but surely this is simply because he is not there concerned with any question of the Church's order. He explicitly addresses those who are already Christians but whose orthodox faith is now endangered by the advance of a popular heretical movement. Again and again he appeals to them to abide in what they heard from the beginning, and nine times he offers them tests by which to assure themselves of the truth of the Christian position (e.g. 'By this we may be sure we know him . . .', etc.). In such letters to members of the Church, why should its familiar *structure* be reflected? John is appealing for continued adherence to the Gospel message, and it is only natural that his appeal should not refer to ecclesiastical order. According to Schweizer, on the other hand, John's purpose is to save his readers from a hierarchical Church; and this interpretation is founded on 3 Jn 9. Diotrephes was a 'monarchical bishop who wanted to rule everything', and personifies the whole tendency towards institutionalism to

which Schweizer thinks John's epistles are a deliberate reaction. The tendency exemplified in the Pastorals, on the other hand, Schweizer presents as a reaction against fanatical gnosticism. In fact, however, is it not certain that the Epistles of John were written in the face of attacks on Christian churches by, precisely, some form of pre-gnosticism? To this fundamental context of the Epistles the Diotrephes episode is purely incidental: John's views about order in the Church are simply not exposed. This method of reading views on Church order into all New Testament writings, whether or not they actually reflect it, has resulted in considerable distortion in this book.

Moreover, in order to reach his conclusions Schweizer has found it necessary to reject the testimony of the earliest of the Apostolic Fathers on Church order in their time, as deviations from Christ's intentions. His whole thesis denies any authentic tradition outside scripture, and he even treats some of the later canonical books (the Pastorals, Ephesians and Colossians) as already suspect. Finally, Schweizer asserts the need for the Church to take stock of itself and of its order in each age by immediate and fresh reference to the message of the New Testament. What is lacking from his analysis is the admission that it is possible for Christ's Church to develop authentically by reference not only to scripture but also to Jesus living in the Church itself continuously to the present day. And did the Holy Spirit, the promised strengthener and guide, defect so soon?

ROBERT SHARP, O.P.

SPIRIT OF FLAME and MOTHER OF CARMEL, by Allison Peers; S.C.M. Press, 7s. 6d. each.

In the Church's mysteries, the flaming candle and the waters of the font together symbolize her power of regeneration. In *Spirit of Flame* and *Mother of Carmel* the two great Spanish saints whose favourite symbols of the divine action were fire and water, are portrayed in their complementary role in regenerating not only the religious family of Carmel but the spirit of contemplative prayer in the Church.

Professor Allison Peers' study of St John of the Cross is a masterpiece of short biography. His wide scholarship gives precision and depth to this most readable story and the very fair presentation of the religious turmoil which forms the background of St John's life shows both tact and skill. He owes his debt to contemporary biographies with what one can only describe as reverent humour. Peers' keen literary perception highlights his appreciation of the Saint's writings: his own style becomes lyrical in appraising the poems, in particular the *Spiritual Canticle*. Indeed, in his enthusiasm for the form of the stanzas he shows some detachment from the underlying theology. The splendid alignment of the teaching of St John of the Cross with scripture, in the second part of the book (which takes the form almost of an apologia for the mystic

life) would, as part of the biography, have contributed to its integrity: St John is revered by his spiritual children as the Doctor of faith rather than of light or darkness. There is no better accompaniment to the study of a saint's doctrine than the story of how he himself lived it. Allison Peers is at pains to give us this story. The endearing human qualities of the saint, his love of nature and music, even his admissions of loneliness, all have value in our understanding of his doctrine.

In contrast to the reflective and slightly awed study of St John of the Cross, the portrait of St Teresa is homely and direct. With insight and affection Allison Peers has distilled from her own writings the quintessence of this Mother of souls: her simplicity and charm, her virility and practical genius; above all, her spiritual greatness. His own enchantment with her words has made the task of selection difficult and the narrative is sometimes overcrowded with quotation. Inevitably her writing looms larger than it could in fact have done in that crowded life where her communion with God overflowed in ceaseless activity, organizing, travelling and the round of religious observance and domestic work. (When it was her turn to do the cooking, she found her Lord among the pots and pans). But it is, of course, her own *Life* and *Foundations* that portray for us the life and work that bore fruit in her incomparable teaching on prayer, which, in the *Way of Perfection* and the *Interior Castle* give her today the title of Mother of souls.

As attractive twin paper-backs these reprints of *Spirit of Flame* and *Mother of Carmel* should go far in furthering Allison Peers' purpose of making these two saints better known and loved and, above all, explored.

SR ANNE, O.D.C.

FATHER RUPERT MAYER, compiled by Anton Koerbling, S.J.; Mercier Press.

There were not so many Christian heroes in Germany prepared to stand up even to Hitler that one more or less makes no difference. So it is a pity that Fr Rupert Mayer, S.J., though hero enough to be a candidate for the Church's altars, does not find a worthy biography in these pages. One is even reminded of a Dominican 'postulator' for the canonization of Bl Martin Porres, who ascribed the reluctance of his very attractive 'Blessed' to work provable miracles to fear of more biographies!

However, the facts of Fr Rupert's life, his charity and courage are served up here and should be nourishment for a sound digestion. Some of us weaker brethren may hope for another cook to serve the sauce and condiments of a little more humanity.

T. D. ROBERTS, S.J.
ARCHBISHOP OF SYGDIA